

**Oral History Interviews on the
Cal Poly Rose Float
50th Anniversary**

Cal Poly Pomona University Library

Cal Poly Rose Float 50th Anniversary Summary

The Cal Poly Rose Float has been jointly created students of California State Polytechnic University, Pomona and California Polytechnic State University, San Luis Obispo every year since 1949. The following interviews were conducted by the Rose Float Alumni Association to commemorate the 50th anniversary of the Cal Poly Rose Float program. Robert E. Kennedy was president of Cal Poly San Luis Obispo from 1967-1979 and was involved with the program from the beginning. Mary Kennedy was the wife of Robert E. Kennedy and also shares her memories of the program. Harold O. Wilson was the dean of the Voorhis Campus, Cal Poly's southern satellite location that eventually grew into the separate university Cal Poly Pomona.

Subject Headings

California Polytechnic State University, San Luis Obispo
California State Polytechnic University, Pomona
Tournament of Roses

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Table of Contents

	<u>Page</u>
Robert E. Kennedy	1-11
Joins Cal Poly	1
First Rose Float	3
Early Floats	5
President of Cal Poly	7
Journalism	10
Rose Float as Public Relations	11
Mary Kennedy Interview	12-13
Harold O. Wilson Interview	13-24
Joins Cal Poly	13
The Voorhis Campus	14
The Kellogg Campus	16
First Rose Float	17
Personal History	18
Impact of the Rose Float Program	21

Cal Poly Rose Float 50th Anniversary

January 25, 1997

Interviews conducted by Paul Lewis

Transcribed by Iman A. Mirza

Part 1: Robert E. Kennedy

PL: My name is Paul Lewis, another in the Rose Float alumni interviews. Today is January 25 and sir, you name?

RK: Robert Kennedy

PL: And what was your involvement at Cal Poly [San Luis Obispo]?

RK: What was my involvement?

PL: Well, when you retired.

RK: When I retired, I was president.

PL: How many years were you at Cal Poly?

RK: I was [at Cal Poly for] 39 years. I started in 1940 and I retired in 1979.

PL: When you started at Cal Poly, what was your first job there?

RK: Well, I was the only journalism teacher, so I was the head of the department. I also was the public relations man, but probably it was the publicity man because that was about all that we were concerned about. I handled student publications and all official publications, like the catalog. And I was advisor for the yearbook and for the school newspaper—huge little chores like that.

PL: How did you find out about Cal Poly?

RK: Well, I've been working in the newspaper business in San Diego and then in advertising and public relations, and the placement office at San Diego State—where I had graduated in 1938—called me and said they had an announcement for a job at this place in San Luis Obispo. If I was interested, they would be happy to send me things. And, in fact, said that when they had inquired of the various deans on the campus up there, "Was anybody that might be qualified for the job?" [that] a couple of the deans had given them my name. So, that's why they were contacting me; that was because I had been active on campus at that time and publications. [Inaudible] yearbook and worked on the editorial page of the newspaper, was president of the senior class, and I handled publicity as a paid publicity man for San Diego State in my last year.

PL: Have you been to San Luis Obispo before you came here for a job?

RK: Once, with my parents when I was much younger. We were traveling between Los Angeles and San Francisco; we stopped for lunch at the place that I later recognized as what was called The Tower Cafe. That was the only time and I really didn't know much about it.

PL: What year was that?

RK: Well, that was probably in the '20s, in the early '20s, maybe well—late '20s. We didn't come to California from Portland, Oregon until 1923. So, sometime between 1923 and 1930, my folks were making a trip and that's when it was. I was probably 10 or 12 years-old at the most.

PL: You were born in Portland?

RK: Portland, Oregon.

RL: Did you buy suits at Needleman Brothers? At Needleman's?

RK: Well, I don't know about that, but my mother worked at Meier & Frank's department store and that's basically where most of our things came from.

PL: Needleman's was my family.

RK: Uh huh.

PL: When you came to Cal Poly, what was the school like?

RK: Well, it was very small. They had fewer than 700 students and the town of San Luis Obispo had a population of about 8,000. And they still had in downtown San Luis Obispo streetlights that were gasoline lights. They had a young man on a bicycle that rode around at night as it turned into evening. He lighted each lamp with a light for the purpose of getting the lights on. They couldn't flip a switch and turn on all the lights; they had to have it hand... it was a strictly hand operation. You might say that people who say, "Wow, we're looking for the good ol' days," [that] they don't know what the good ol' days were like.

PL: *Now, when you were*—You said you started in journalism, and when did you get into administration of the university? How did that happen?

RK: Well, I suppose it would be because I was involved in the public relations. That public relations activity meant that I was in direct contact with Julian McPhee, who was the president. Julian McPhee was also the chief of the Bureau of Agricultural Education. He took the job at Cal Poly on basically a half-time basis; he continued to be the chief of the Bureau of Agricultural Education and the president of Cal Poly, and he ran both programs. In fact, he moved the headquarters for the Bureau of Agricultural Education to the campus at Cal Poly, so that he could handle both jobs at the same time. Because his interest in Cal Poly was because of its agricultural program; he wanted to improve it, he wanted to expand it, he wanted more money for it, [and] he wanted more students. To get more students, you needed publicity and you needed good public

relations. So I was in, what you would say, very direct communications with the President. Which, normally, let's say, a faculty member wouldn't have had that kind of daily contact, and everything I wrote at the beginning had to be cleared by Julian McPhee. He wanted to make sure that it said what he wanted to say about the institution. So, it was that process that brought me under direct connection with the administration of the institution.

PL: Now, when you started doing publicity for the school, when you were in journalism—head of the Journalism department, was he still in Sacramento?

RK: No, he was here. He'd already moved his headquarters to San Luis Obispo and brought with him a number of his people who were called regional supervisors. One of those regional supervisors was George Cooper. George Cooper had been an excellent newspaper man and had handled the public relations for the Bureau of Agricultural Education. He'd brought him onto the campus and in fact, it was George Cooper with whom I had the first contact when there was an interview for the job. In other words, I was told after I applied for the job to go to Los Angeles to the state department building and meet with a man by the name of George Cooper—which I did. In fact, I went with my Model A Ford from San Diego to Los Angeles to the state department job. With me, I took a man by the name of Ed Thomas, who was a fraternity brother of mine and had been the sports editor of the *Aztec* in San Diego when I was the editor at the editorial page. He had also been recommended for the job; we wrote up together and were both interviewed. He went into the interview with George Cooper first and came out and said to me very seriously, "Come on Kennedy, we might as well go home. I got the job, see." And I said, "Well since I made the trip, I think I'll wait and go in." And when I came out, I said to him, "By the way Ed, you didn't have a chance." Ed Thomas became the editor of the *San Diego Union*—a very good job and one that he probably succeeded at probably better than I did as President of Cal Poly.

PL: No, I think you're well-regarded at Cal Poly. What year did you become President of Cal Poly?

RK: In 1967

PL: Okay. The Rose Float parade started in '49—

RK: '49.

PL: —and you were at that point on campus for 10 years?

RK: No, I took a leave of absence in 1948. In fact, it was the first leave-with-pay that Cal Poly ever gave anybody. Julian McPhee agreed with me that I should get a master's degree, and I sold him on the idea that we should have a major on Agriculture Journalism. He liked that idea and I said that if I went to Stanford University, I could write a dissertation on how to put in a program in Agriculture Journalism. He said, "That's a good idea," and so I got the first—it was called a "leave with difference in pay." They hired somebody to take my job and they hired him for less money than I was making; I got the difference in pay. The difference in pay was \$135 a month. I took a job at the *Palo Alto Times* as a reporter. I had a wife and four kids when I took that leave

of absence. We lived in Los Altos and I went to school, got a master's degree, and I came back in 1949.

RK: At the time of that first Rose Parade, I received a message from Julian McPhee, wanting to know from me what I thought about whether we should get involved in this business of having a float in the Rose Parade. He said that Harold Wilson the then-dean of the Voorhis Campus which is a branch of Cal Poly, that had been established [as] a gift from the Charles B. Voorhis family in 1938. That gift of some 167 acres, as I recall, with avocados and citrus gave this campus at San Luis Obispo a branch in Southern California, where they could have subtropical agriculture, which is what we couldn't have in San Luis Obispo.

RK: So, Harry Wilson had recommended Julian McPhee that they put in a float. He first was talking about doing it just for the southern campus because they thought that was where they could get publicity on it. McPhee's answer was, "If you're going to have a float in the parade, it's got to be for both campuses," and that's the way it turned out. One of the students that was the real leader of that first request, as I recall, was Bob Stein—who was a student at the Voorhis Campus. He later transferred to San Luis Obispo, as all students did who went to Voorhis; they always had to come to San Luis Obispo for the last two years to graduate. And when he came to San Luis Obispo, he became the editor of the yearbook. But he was the person who went to see the mayor and the mayor was Mayor [Warren] Dorn—who lives in Morro Bay now. [He] retired but he was the mayor at Pasadena. It was he that got Cal Poly into the parade more than I think anybody else. Harold Wilson had recommended to Julian McPhee that we tried to get into the parade, and he (McPhee) had contacted me as the so-called Public Relations man, "What do you think of the idea?" I thought it was a great idea; I couldn't think of any way you can get that much publicity for so little cost—actual cost—but I didn't realize what kind of competition we were going to get into.

PL: Now, whose idea was it? Was it the students who went to Wilson, or did Wilson go to the students? How did it all start?

RK: I think the students went to Wilson. You can find that out from Harold Wilson better than from me, but it's my opinion that it was the students who had the idea. They had the idea because they were Ornamental Horticulture students, and they could see a great connection between [a] Rose Parade float and the major in Ornamental Horticulture. They could see that the relationship between decorating a float and their major. Then the students at San Luis Obispo, when they got involved into the course, they could see the great engineering possibilities of the fact that there was going to have to be... if there's going to be [competitions], they're going to have to have animations. So, for years, it seemed to me that the Cal Poly floats were always kind of leading the edge of animation. I'm not sure if that's still true because they've all picked up on the latest technologies. I do think that [Cal] Poly was really leading in the animation department.

PL: So, what do you remember of the first float? About how it happened and the feeling on campus where after it was the parade?

RK: Well, as I said, during that first float in January of '49, I was still in Palo Alto—going to Stanford. While I saw it on TV, I didn't have any absolute connections with the students or

anybody else on the thing other than to have responded to McPhee's request by saying I thought it was a good idea; let's do it, you know. I would say that my recollections of it in a more direct way was related to subsequent 1950. From 1950 on, I became much more conscious of what they were doing and so on.

PL: What do you remember of the first 10 years? I want to break it down into segments for a moment—

RK: Yeah.

PL: So, the first 10 years, 1950s up to 1960.

RK: Well, I'd have to say that it seemed to me that what was happening... every time I would watch on television—and I would watch the live thing as soon as I had a television set—I would watch these parades and I realize that the competition was getting very, very stiff. Certainly, we were going to have to put lots of effort into it. Our first few floats were—you might say by comparison to the way it is in the 90s—I wouldn't say amateurish. I don't think any of our floats ever would have been classified as amateurish in terms of the times, but certainly compared to the way it is now and the way it was beginning to grow, we would have to have said that the handwriting was on the wall in terms of our involvement, in terms of numbers of students that were going to have to be involved and the money that was going to have to be raised in order to be competitive. It seemed to me that that was the biggest impression that I got out of the first 10 years is that if we were to stay in this business, we were going to have to continue to be very competitive. That would mean a lot of extra work for students and faculty and certainly, there has to be money raised by the student body in order to be competitive.

PL: Do you have any involvement with that? I mean, what was your involvement in those first few years when you were still head of publicity?

RK: *Well, I would say that I would always... when they were organizing—*Because it was a public relations effort, the proposal of what they were going to do—for a theme and sketches and so on—came across my desk. In fact, I could react to the things; there's no question but what I considered it one of the most important public relations activities of the institution. In that respect, since I was the Public Relations Director, I naturally had a responsibility to see to it that something wasn't on that float or wasn't a part of that float; that would be in fact be an embarrassment to us in some way. *You might say that I was—*While I tried to camouflage that role by not letting the students think of me as a 'censor,' I was in fact the... if not the alderman, the next to the last decision-maker in regard to whether that particular float as it was proposed was the one that we were going to put in the parade.

PL: Were there ever any questionable floats?

RK: Oh, yes. There were a number of things. When the students tried to put in some little - what you might call family jokes; things that were happening on the campus and so on, that they were tucking away little signs that would've... they thought that the kids on the campuses would get a big bang out of some things that would be like... well during the 60s, you might say. There was

one time when they tucked away a little sign that said “Question Authority” in the proposal that is. It didn’t get into the float because I was one of the authorities that they were questioning, I suppose. Right.

PL: What other things happened—student pranks like that—do you remember?

RK: The students at Cal Poly, who would become involved in the Rose Parade float, I think we’re always very serious and responsible individuals who knew what the value of this activity was for this institution. Although, very few students at any time that didn’t want their institution to have a good reputation, I think that they all recognize that as graduates that they would someday be, that it was best if their institution had a good reputation. They were not about ready to destroy the reputation by doing something [that] would have been considered to be either detrimental or sort of asinine reaction. I think that they felt they were doing a great job and I tried always to make sure they knew that. My role sometimes, Paul, was to try and encourage them to continue. There were a lot of times that the students would begin to say, “Hey, this is an awful lot of work. Maybe we ought to be not doing this, you know. Maybe we ought to pull out of this thing.” So, as I say, as the Public Relations Director, I was always a part of the cheering section. I want to make sure the students never get the idea that this is more work than its worth, because I thought it was very, very valuable.

PL: Did you ever go to the parade in person?

RK: Yes, several times. I can’t remember exactly, but so did McPhee, on several occasions. On one occasion, I remember we both went together to the parade. But after the popularity of television, there weren’t any questions; I soon discovered that you saw the parade better watching television than you did sitting on a curb.

PL: But it’s more fun in person though, isn’t it?

RK: Well, I don’t know. There’s a lot of convenience to sitting at home and drinking a cup of hot coffee as compared to freezing yourself off down there on New Year’s Day.

PL: But the first time you went in person, what was your feeling [when] that Cal Poly float went by?

RK: I was very proud. I was very proud that I might say I got tears in my eyes with the fact that the students were able to do such a tremendous job. And competitions with corporations that had hired the best decorators, the best designers in the world spent... I don’t know how many thousands and thousands of dollars to get the publicity, and to think that our students were doing the same thing on a voluntary basis was just a great heart tug.

PL: And you’ve now seen 49 Cal Poly floats on the parade route with this last one. What was the feeling [on] this January 1st?

RK: Well, I don’t know. It just seemed to me that we were in over our heads to tell you the truth. I just begin to think that right at the beginning, we would never be able to keep this up. I thought,

“You know, maybe this whole idea is just because of the enthusiasm of a few people like a Bob Stein and a few people that he was able to get to do it [with],” and I was afraid that the next couple of times around it would be... Well, to tell you the truth, I begin to think that Julian McPhee would like it so well that the whole load would fall on me. He’d say to me, “Well, let’s have another float in the parade. Now, you figure out how to do it.” I was awfully happy that the students took it upon themselves to see to it that this is one of the great traditions of Cal Poly has been sustained over these many years, and it was the students’ efforts entirely. I mean, the administration has backed off of it. It doesn’t really participate other than to, as I say, be a part of the cheering section. It’s one fantastic contribution that the students make to the public relations of the institution.

PL: Did you ever think you would be seeing Cal Poly’s 50th float in the Rose Parade?

RK: No, no. Of course, at 81 years of age, I think that at any time, I get to see a new year come around, I think it’s a miracle.

PL: You became president in what year again?

RK: In ‘67.

PL: How did you become President? Did McPhee retire and then—

RK: Yeah, he retired after 33 years. He became president in 1933 and he retired in 1966. 33 years and in a period of ten months after he retired, he was due to retire on the year he did retire in 1966. That is, the trustees had established the fact that anybody that was any president who was 70 years of age had to retire in the year in which he became 70. And McPhee became 70 on February 7 of 1966. He became ill in May of that year, and he didn’t finish out the year; he anticipated finishing out the fiscal year, that is, right up until the end of June.

RK: But he actually had to step down; he had cancer and it was diagnosed in May. He was very ill, and he only lived approximately a year and half after that. They appointed Dale Andrews—who had been Dean of the College at San Luis Obispo—as the acting president for that first period of 10 months, before the trustees made a decision about who should be the permanent president. So, I felt very fortunate that the trustees had selected me.

RK: I should say that McPhee had promoted me from Public Relations Director to Assistant to the President, and then the Dean of Arts and Sciences [to] then Vice President. I had been Vice President for eight years and there was only one vice president at that time. I was Vice President in charge of Operations at both San Luis Obispo and Cal Poly southern campus—both Voorhis and Kellogg campuses. [I] Had come back from San Luis Obispo and he had many times said to me that he was preparing me to be his successor. I had laughed at him on a number of occasions [and] said, “Well that’s nice boss, but you aren’t the one that’s going to decide, you know, it’s going to be a board of trustees.” He said, “But on the other hand,” he says, “... I’ve had influence; I picked my successor when I stepped out of the job as chief of the Bureau of Agricultural Education.” And he had; that man became Byron McMahan, who had been his assistant, and he became chief of the Bureau. When he was a State Director of Vocational

Education—that is when McPhee was state director of vocational education from 1945 to 1949—he had picked Wesley P. Smith, who was his assistant, to be the next director. He might say, [he] pulled it off.

So, when he said to me that I was his choice, I had to admit that he had a good track record and it was possible. But it was a new board of trustees; [it] included Governor Reagan, [inaudible] the speaker, there were 25 people involved in making this decision on the Board of Trustees. And I thought that it's entirely possible that they won't want somebody that has been Julian McPhee's favorite to have the job. But it worked out and I was selected and appreciated the opportunity; I think it was a great experience.

PL: So, you've never even applied for the job? They just select [and] told you that you've been selected or?

RK: Well, that's right. In fact, the way it worked is several years before McPhee retired, the then-chancellor Glenn Dumke—the chancellor of the [California State Colleges] system—had contacted me and said he was putting together a panel; by that, he meant a list of people who he would present to the Board of Trustees from time to time when there was a vacancy in the system. At that time, there were 17 campuses, later 19, there's some 20 campuses now in the system. From time to time, there were vacancies. In fact, during the 60's, they had trouble; as you all know, there was a lot of turnovers. The average length of time that some of these people were present was about six months and then they'd check out. The students were not only questioning authority, but they were actually throwing rocks. So, it wasn't always that much of a good thing to be the president of one of those campuses. At any rate, the Chancellor had put me on this panel, that is, a list of potential presidents. But I had never, as you say, submitted an application. I never applied and that was the way they did it. They would pick candidates themselves from people that they thought might do the job, and they would gather the information they needed from various sources. That's the way they did it.

PL: When you became president of the university—

RK: When I became president, it was not a university.

PL: —throughout the college, I'm sorry.

RK: It was a college. It became a university after I was president.

PL: When you became president of the college, you would have this somewhat intimate involvement with [the] Rose Parade - with Rose Float Club with the floats. Did you maintain that relationship when you were president?

RK: Well, when you use the word “intimate”—definitely nothing was very intimate after that. In other words, you're dealing with people. You've got a Dean of Students who's working with an Activities Officer. The chain of command goes down the line, so people who are working with the students on the Rose Parade were advisors, faculty advisors, and people out of the Dean of Students Office and so on. Mine would be... only in so far as I would, at least once a year, go to

something that the Rose Float Committee was putting on. I would usually go there at their request in order to give a little talk about the importance of the Rose Float, and why I was happy that the students were involved in it. It was a little, you might say, cheerleading.

PL: Did you ever take a stroll down to the lab, to see what they were working on before the—

RK: Sure, a number of times I did that. They would oftentimes send up to the president's office a sketch of a proposed design and description of what they were going to do. I oftentimes, out of just sheer curiosity, particularly sensed the San Luis Obispo campus seemed to always draw the kind of complicated animation part of the float. I don't know whether that was the way it was the last couple of times or not, but that's the way it was for quite a few years. I was always very curious about how they were going to make these things work.

PL: Did you ever ride on a float?

RK: [I] Never did.

PL: What else... [inaudible] a couple of things here.

RK: Yeah.

PL: Now, you retired in 1979.

RK: Right. And that's a long time ago, you know that? President Warren Baker and I had a conversation on the phone the other day about some things; he was asking me some questions about the past and we both were struck by the fact that he has been the president for 18 years now. That exceeds the length of time that I was president but doesn't quite exceed the length of time when I put vice-president and president [terms] together.

RK: During the years that I was president, I often thought I was carrying about the same load as the president because by that time, Julian McPhee kept talking about retiring. He'd keep saying, "I don't want any of that stuff on my desk. You should take care of it. Just keep that stuff off my desk." Well, in order to keep things off his desk, you had to approve all kinds of things or disapprove all kinds of things. That was a harder job, in my opinion, than being president because every time I disapprove something or approve something, I always went to bed at night wondering when I report this to the president as a fait accompli, will he stand behind me? Or will he be blowing up about something that he wouldn't have done it that way? There's a lot of things that you do that when you're vice president, and you have authority, you still have to worry about what you're going to do is going to please the president.

You do, indeed, as the vice president work at the pleasure of the president. He can't fire you, maybe, but he can remove you from that office and reassign you. I could've been sent back to the Journalism department at any point. *When I became an administrator*—The first time I became an administrator as an assistant to the president, when I was appointed to that, I asked for a joint appointment which would be—and it was—I was also a tenured member of the Journalism faculty. If I didn't succeed in the job as the assistant to the president, the dean, or vice president,

and he wanted to reassign me, I would automatically have gone back to the Journalism department as a teacher. So, you might say I didn't have to worry too much about my job; I always had a job. But you would lose money, you would lose prestige, you would lose the opportunity to continue to do something at a higher-level.

PL: Did you ever have to get involved in bailing the students out? Did students ever manage to get themselves in any trouble that you had to—

RK: In connection with the Rose Parade?

PL: Yeah. Or in general?

RK: I would say that's pretty hard to pin down. I can't recall any specific instances of that except in so far as I've worked with the school newspaper. In the early years as the advisor for the school paper, I frequently had to go to the president's office and explain an editorial. In fact, on that wall over there you see the picture of Roy Brophy. You see Roy Brophy there? He was the chairman of the Board of Trustees at the time that picture was taken. That was taken at a commencement exercise and he's sitting next to me. What does it say on the description?

PL: "To Bob, my teacher and always my close friend."

RK: Yeah. Well, he was the first student that I had at Cal Poly. When I arrived at Cal Poly in September of 1940, he was the editor of the school paper, of *The Mustang*. You see how big he is? He's a big guy, you see. He's about 6'2" and I'm 5'8". He weighed about 250 lbs. And I weighed about 150 lbs. I'm the advisor and I'm telling him what to do. He's a pretty cocky guy and he had to be pretty cocky to become chairman of the Board of Trustees in these later years.

RK: He didn't always believe what I told him. And he frequently, as the editor, did what he wanted to do. On a number of occasions, he editorialized against some action that the president had taken. I had to explain to Julian McPhee that I believed in freedom of the press, my belief that in the good long run, it would be best if we didn't try to stop the editor from writing what he wanted to write. Those are the kind of things, I guess. Not only did I do that on behalf of Brophy, but I probably did it on behalf of every editor over the years because editors frequently wrote editorials that the administration didn't care for.

RK: In fact, the other day I was clearing out my files here and I ran across a whole series of cartoons that a young man, who was a cartoonist for *The Mustang* had done about me. He had a little letter in it. It says, "I'm now a cartoonist for the *Santa Monica Outlook*. I'm doing the kind of job I want to do, and they think I'm a pretty good political cartoonist. I thank you very much for being such a good subject and because I practiced on you." And he says, "I've enclosed all the originals of these cartoons that I did on you over the years." I've got a whole collection of them and I thought about having them framed, although they're not very complimentary in terms of the way I look. Nor are they complimentary about the things that I did or didn't do. He picked out every little thing that was controversial at the time and had some really neat cartoon about it. I enjoyed the cartoons.

PL: What does it mean to you for Cal Poly having its 50th float? As a milestone mark, people like these big milestones.

RK: For this Rose Parade float... Well, I think that any time a tradition is maintained for these numbers of years, it's significant. I think that that's important and I think that it adds to the current crop of students. [They] need to know that something that is going on now has been going on for a long time. That's one of the reasons why I was awfully sorry; it was necessary to eliminate Poly Royal as kind of an activity [that] it was. I probably would not have done it the same way that President Baker did, but something had to be done about Poly Royal. There wasn't any question that it got out of hand. When a tradition like the Rose Parade is successful and has done in such good taste as this has been over these 50 years, I think it's very significant that a celebration of it be held so that the students now and in the future will know that they have a tradition that's worthy of being continued.

PL: Now, this video is going to be played or edited in parts. Some of it is for our historical records, but parts will be edited and played at the banquet of this next December—

RK: Yeah.

PL: —which you'll be at, probably.

RK: Yeah.

PL: What would you like to say to the students in that way?

RK: Well, I would like to encourage the students who volunteered to become a part of this Rose Parade tradition to realize that they're doing something that's very important to the future and reputation of the university. They are continuing the tradition that has met a lot; the fact that Cal Poly is the most popular campus in the California State University system is, to me, one of the most unbelievable things that has happened in my career.

RK: When I came here in 1940, Cal Poly was at the bottom of the list, of only eight campuses. It was considered the least desirable. It was considered the one that had the least effective academic reputation. It was an institution that needed lots of improvement, and that's what the administration of Julian McPhee and Bob Kennedy put our life blood into. [It] was to build the reputation of the institution to make it a better institution, and in this respect, the people that have volunteered for putting together a Rose Parade float have had a great role to play in bringing this institution to the attention of the public. It's an absolutely immeasurable contribution that they've made. You couldn't buy the kind of public relations that has resulted from this participation in the Pasadena Rose Tournament.

PL: Okay, anything else?

RK: I think I've said more than is necessary by a lot.

PL: Thank you very much. Let me stop this [recording].

Part 2: Mary Kennedy

PL: Good evening, it is January 25, 1997 and I'm sitting here with—

MK: Mary Kennedy.

PL: And your relationship to Cal Poly [is]?

MK: Well, that's about all I know—is Cal Poly. My relationship existed with the institution since 1940.

PL: And why would that be?

MK: Well, it's just been my life, Paul.

PL: But you were married to the former president?

MK: Initially just to a Journalism instructor, who ended up being the president of Cal Poly.

PL: We're talking about the Cal Poly Rose Float, and the thing [is] that you were here on campus and involved with all those years through his life with is, what are your recollections of Cal Poly Rose Float? Or Cal Poly's entries in the Rose Parade?

MK: Well, I thought it was pretty remarkable that students could put together floats that could compete with all those other beautiful floats that had lots of money and expertise behind it; this was a volunteer activity and it came off pretty well, I thought over the years.

PL: During the years when you were at the parade or saw it on TV, what was your feeling when you saw the float come down the street?

MK: It was exciting. It's like members of your family involved in something; it gives you a surge.

PL: What about the students? What was your feeling about the students who were involved? Did you ever get to know them or talk to them?

MK: Oh yes, many times we'd visit the sites where they were putting the float together and there was always lots of excitement there. They were putting up with a lot of conditions that [were] cold and [have] no meals sometimes, whether their thoughts all on one thing and getting that put together and making something quite remarkable out of it.

PL: In your travels, whenever you would travel outside of California—you said you were from San Luis Obispo and Cal Poly—did people ever know about the Rose Parade Float? Would they ever ask you about it?

MK: Oh yes. Many times, they would refer to having seen the float, the Rose Parade float.

PL: So just by your association with Cal Poly, they knew about the—

MK: The float.

PL: And what did that mean to you when you'd hear something like that?

MK: Well, it always gave me a proud moment.

PL: That's great. Now, you saw the first float go down the parade route on TV, I think?

MK: Perhaps. I can't swear on a stack of Bibles but—

PL: You were in Stanford for that?

MK: Mhmm.

PL: Now, when you first heard that Cal Poly was in it almost 50 years ago, and then the first few years that you remember being back here and seeing the float being built on the parade route, did you ever think you'd see 50 Cal Poly floats?

MK: No. no. I never thought of that. As I look back, I'm really amazed at what I have seen.

PL: What does it mean to you to see Cal Poly's 50th entry in the Rose Parade?

MK: Here again, I'm amazed and pleased and proud.

PL: Great, thank you very much.

Part 3: Harold O. Wilson

PL: This is Paul Lewis with a Rose Float alumni interview for the 50th anniversary. Today is Sunday, January 26, and I'm sitting with...

HW: Harold O. Wilson

PL: And Mr. Wilson, [do] you have some experience with Cal Poly?

HW: Quite a little bit, Paul. I first came to Cal Poly in August of 1932 to do my practice teaching; I just graduated [from] UC Davis in the spring and was appointed as a cadet. A cadet in those days was people who were selected to go into act[ing] teachers in the state of California.

HW: We came here to San Luis Obispo to do some of our practice teaching; we had come in August of that 1932 period to... well they have an annual conference of agricultural teachers of the state. At that time, they had it in August, before school started in September. There were 12

of us selected to become agriculture teachers in California Vocational Agriculture - Smith-Hughes at that time; it still is, actually.

HW: When I came across that hill - in the San Luis Obispo from that San Joaquin Valley where it was hot - driving a Model T Ford, which was a Model T roadster [with] red wheels. It was a pretty sporty thing at that time. But I tell you, when I ran into the San Luis Obispo climate from that San Joaquin Valley heat, I thought if I were to get a chance to get back here, I will.

HW: So, my first teaching [job] was at the Excelsior High School; I started the Agricultural Department at Norwalk Excelsior High School. [I] Was there for three years; came back to Cal Poly as a second man in the Animal Husbandry department. Vard Shepard was the head of the department. I was a swine specialist. I'd been reared in a farm in the San Joaquin Valley and majored down [inaudible] at Davis. Came back into Poly as a second man of the department.

HW: At that time, there were about maybe 300 students, around 200 in Agriculture and 150 or so in the Industrial department. I taught here for an animal hospital husbandry until the beginning of World War II, in 1941. At that time, of course, Cal Poly was made up only of men; they were being drafted into the service. So, it got down to where there were only about 50 students left of Poly and the Bureau of Agricultural Education at that time, Mr. McPhee, was President of Cal Poly and Chief of Bureau of Agricultural Education. Cal Poly was a definite adjunct to the Bureau of Agricultural Education and supported the program to a great degree.

HW: Beginning of World War II, the Bureau of Agricultural Education was selected to head up in California a department of a war production training program. It was called 'Out of school: Youth and Adult.' It was particularly to provide training for rural people in war effort: ag[ricultural] mechanics, gardening, canning. One of the big programs became canning, where housewives did the canning in a commercial setting. So, then I became- Two men of us who were in agriculture at Cal Poly were selected by President McPhee to head up to this war production training program and we had to write the state plan. I did that for one year, and at that time after we got the pro-groups established, I might say that I was supervising the war production training programs from the Alameda county and Modesto South and the other gentleman who was with me supervised the program starting in the northern California area.

HW: But after a year, it was decided that the regular Bureau... the supervisors of Bureau of Agricultural Education would become the supervisors of the war production training program too, since they were going into the same schools that eliminated a lot of duplication. So, I became one of the regional supervisors at that time and was my county. My areas of supervision were San Luis Obispo, Santa Barbara, Ventura, and Los Angeles counties. My office was working out of the state building of Los Angeles. So that was during the war years of 1941 to 1946.

HW: During those years of the latter part - after World War II was over - there was a question: is the Voorhis campus going to be reopened by Cal Poly? Let me go back just a little bit. In 1938, one of my students in Animal Husbandry's father was with the California Fruit Grower's Exchange, Sun Kist, and lived right across the campus in San Dimas, from what was the Voorhis School for Boys at that time. Jerry Voorhis was the headmaster to begin with in 1926, when they

started the program. But in 1936, he became a congressman from that area. While he got into the field of politics, he was the [only] Democrat elected in a strictly republican community; Pomona; Covina; Whittier, that area which was very conservative; agricultural at that time, Citrus.

HW: When Jerry became congressman, his father who had the money to establish the Voorhis school for boys, I might say he established that Voorhis School for Boys as a philanthropy to provide a school and a home for boys that needed a home. Most of them were orphans or half-orphans. They were boys ranging in age from about five or six years of age up to high school and beyond high school because although they didn't take their high school education program at the Voorhis school, they were blessed to [live] in the San Dimas school district. They went to La Verne high school. Anyway, they had about 75 students and it was strictly a philanthropy, as I said earlier. When Jerry became congressman, Mr. Voorhis didn't want to continue with the school, so he was looking around for somebody to give it to. Mr.- I can't remember the name now of the Sun Kist grower. Eileen, do you remember that... Eileen?

Distant mumbling in background

HW: Do you remember the name of the man whose son was here at Poly and my student who was a neighbor to the Voorhis school?

Inaudible answers from Eileen in background

HW: Yeah. Okay. Anyway, he was very interested and very pleased with the progress that his son had made here in Cal Poly, San Luis Obispo. And he came up for the Poly Royal; the first Poly Royal was in the spring of 1938. This gentleman asked me, he said, "Do you know Mr. Wilson that... has Cal Poly ever thought about having a branch in Los Angeles? In the Southern California area?" And we had talked about that because San Luis Obispo had only one - at that time - senator and one assembly member representing him; and we knew we had to have state funds if we were going to grow and increase in size. We'd been talking about it in our various faculty meetings at that time with President McPhee over a period of a year or so.

HW: Now I immediately said to this gentleman, I said, "Yes, we don't have a branch but thought about it." He started talking to me and I said, "I'm not the person you should talk to. I want to take you up and introduce you to President McPhee and talk with him about that." So, I went to see Mr. McPhee - that was on Saturday afternoon. Following Monday, Mr. McPhee went south, met with this gentleman and with Mr. Voorhis, who owned the school. As a result of it, the Voorhis campus was donated to the state of California for the use of Cal Poly; the school opened in the fall of 1938. It stayed opened until 1943, when World War II took all the students that were there, and school was closed down.

HW: So, the question was then, after World War II, is the Voorhis Campus going to reopen? I was the supervisor in Agricultural Education at the time in Los Angeles - as I said Los Angeles, Ventura, Santa Barbara, San Luis Obispo counties. And Los Angeles county had a lot of assemblymen and several senators. In Orange county [it] was heavily populated too, and had many legislators. So, knowing the political picture, I was strong for reopening the Voorhis

Campus, so that Cal Poly would have a foot in the door down in Southern California. It could attract the interest of the state politicians, legislators.

HW: So, it was decided that the Voorhis Campus reopen, and when that was done Mr. McPhee said, "Harold, you talked me into reopening the Voorhis Campus; you're going to have to go down and run it." I said, "Well, I don't even have a doctorate's degree. I don't have a master's degree," and he says "That's okay. I'll make you the Dean of the Voorhis Campus." So, I became dean of the Voorhis Campus and we reopened that campus in the fall of '46.

HW: We had a budget that would handle only about 200 students; by the way, 95% of them were returning veterans. [They] had been in World War II, young men. At that time, Cal Poly was still an all-male school. We reopened with about 250-260 students and it grew from that point on. We knew we were going to have to get more facilities so at that time, the Kellogg campus (Kellogg Horse Farm) - which had been given first to the University of California in 1932 by Mr. Kellogg to be used as a breeding foundation farm for Arabian horses - because Mr. Kellogg had purchased Arabian horses from all over the world; he had some of the best breeding stock in the world and Arabian horses at the Kellogg farm.

HW: Now that's Mr. Kellogg, Keith Kellogg from Michigan, the cornflakes people. He was getting old and wanted to be shed of the farm, so he gave it to the University of California - but that didn't work out so well. And when World War II started in 1941-1942, their farm was the Kellogg ranch, [which] was taken over by the U.S. Army as a remount station for the cavalry. The Army operated it during World War II, but at the end of World War II, the cavalry had disappeared as an arm of the U.S. Army; the army didn't have funds to continue operating the Kellogg Horse Farm. They gave it to the U.S. Department of Agriculture; well the U.S. Department of Agriculture didn't have the money budget to run it either, so they started selling off the Arabian horses.

HW: It raised the ire of the Kellogg Foundation, which had been informed at that time, and Mr. Kellogg, and the Arabian horse breeders throughout the world - actually, protested heavily. So, the [U.S.] Department of Agriculture said, "Well, we will give the ranch back to the Kellogg Foundation." Well, the Kellogg Foundation didn't want to continue operating the farm, so they were looking for a place to give it to somebody else.

HW: Many people wanted it [and] many schools: the University of California would've liked to have it back; Claremont Colleges wanted it; Mt. Sac [Mount San Antonio Jr. College] was just being formed, and they would like to have had it. We had our eye on it too. So as a result, we met with the people in the political area as well as with the Kellogg Foundation and with Mr. Kellogg. The Kellogg Foundation and Mr. Kellogg were real pleased with the type of philosophy of the "Learn by Doing" philosophy of Cal Poly.

HW: The crux of it was that it was decided in 1948 that the Kellogg Ranch would become an arm of and was accepted by the state of California for use at Cal Poly. But we didn't have the money and the Kellogg Ranch was not set up at that time to run the... to [inaudible] the school from the Kellogg Campus itself - because there were a lot of Arabian horse barns and some residences and that type of thing, but they were not school facilities. But we knew that that's

where we were going to expand, so we were successful in getting some money from the state legislature to start building on the Kellogg campus. That was in 1950.

HW: So I will not go ahead and continue with that program in development of the Kellogg ranch, but I will go back to the Voorhis campus and in the spring of 1948, two students - one of the in AG Journalism (Bob Stein) and the other in Ornamental Horticulture (Don Miller). Don Miller was from Pasadena, and Bob Stein was from Glendale. They were gung-ho students and I think Don Miller's father had some relationship with either the city council of Pasadena or with the Rose Parade tournament committee.

HW: Anyway, the boys, Don Miller and Bob Stein, came to me in the spring of 1948 and they said, "You know, we could have a float in the Rose Parade: Tournament of Roses. What would you think about it?" I said, "Boy, that is a big program. That would be really tough, wouldn't it?" "No, we could do it," so they convinced me that we might have a chance to do that. So, I said, "Well first though, I need to talk to President McPhee because this would be a big policy thing."

HW: So, I came to San Luis Obispo, as I did once about a month anyway, for conferences; I was the dean and President McPhee was president of the University of Collates (?) at that time. So, it was decided. Mr. McPhee said, "Well, yeah I think it would be fine. It would be great publicity for Cal Poly. But I want to be sure that the float is entered in the name of both campuses: San Luis Obispo and the Voorhis campus." I was agreeable to that and so were our students at the Voorhis campus, although we knew that since we were located in the south, the Voorhis student body would be the ones who would probably have to take the lead in doing most of the work at that time. That proved to be the case.

HW: It was decided to go ahead, and as you know, plans have to be approved and designs have to be set and everything. I'll have to look up my annual here - the old 1949 annual - what the theme was at that time. I'd like to just read a little bit from the article here; this is Tournament Roses' entry, "The greatest undertaking that Cal Poly has ever participated in was accomplished this year. By entering a float representing the California State Polytechnic College in the Pasadena Tournament Roses Parade, for the first time, a precedent has been established whereby Cal Poly will be fully represented in one of the greatest spectacles of the world. In the middle of July last year, the original idea of entering a float in the Rose Parade was formulated by two Cal Poly students"—his was Don Miller and Bob Stein and I told you that—"and with the help of faculty, work was started before the fall term began. Flowers, at that time, were planted in the school plow on the campus. Difficulty such as cow eating the flowers and adverse weather conditions were encountered in this flower-growing program. Because of these setbacks, the portion of the flowers that went into the float decoration were purchased. The actual float was started after the school term opened and keeping with the theme of Rose Parade 'Childhood Memories' A Jack in the Box float was suggested as an attractive entry, but this suggestion had to be dropped when Cal Poly was notified that another participant had already received approval for the idea. The rocking horse idea was then suggested, and the float was subsequently planned and constructed in the agricultural mechanics shop."

HW: As you can well imagine, the what's-the-word had to be done then at that time by the Voorhis Campus students. We had about 300 students at that time—all men—and they really did

work and put it together. The first float, the contribution was made by San Luis Obispo; they had formed a Rose Parade Committee here at that time and the students were very cooperative. The biggest thing was that the San Luis Obispo, Cal Poly Student Body furnished the money to buy the extra flowers. I can't remember how much it was, but it was a few hundred flowers that was contributed by the Kellogg, San Luis Obispo campus.

HW: The committee members then came down to help decorate the float that last day or two as you know, all the work that has to be done in terms of pasting all of the flowers on the float. We had this rocking horse, rocking horse float. One of the faculty members - in fact, the head of the OH [Ornamental Horticulture] department - Jolly Batcheller, this little boy rode on the big rocking horse float; four other children of faculty members rode on the float with the rocking horse. It received commendation; it was a really amateur job at that time, but it worked out real well. It's gone along from there.

HW: The second float - which would've been the January 1 of 1950 - by that time we had acquired the Kellogg Campus, as I talked about earlier. Along with Arabian horses, the Kellogg's also have a team of Percheron horses. Of course, Percherons are the big draft horses and they were weighing 1,800 to 2,200 lbs. We had a team of iron gray Percheron horses; it made a team of six. And in the second float, we had a '49er wagon and pulled by this team of six Percheron horses in the parade; it was one of the few horse teams in the parade at that time - there haven't been many since. That was a good float and of course the years have come by since, and Cal Poly has really maintained and increased its quality.

HW: I think this last float was one of the best that I've seen, but I could go back [inaudible] have pictures. I hope the pictures are still over in the library at San Luis Obispo of the entries of all the years - 49 of them, 50 coming up is it? But I tell you, one thing I want to say is that the dedication of the students at both San Luis Obispo and Voorhis who were on the Rose Float committee is to be commended in this university. All of those committee members... our big vote of thanks and appreciation because I don't think there's anything that Cal Poly has done that has brought more favorable advertising and good name to both campuses of Cal Poly than the Rose entry parade.

HW: It's been a great program, and I just hope that it will continue even though the Cal Poly Kellogg is a separate institution in turning now from the San Luis Obispo campus; they both have the names of Polytechnic. I hope they both continue to specialize and emphasize the "Learn By Doing" philosophy, and that the two campuses continue to have a Rose Float entry as long as there's a Rose Tournament.

PL: Great, now if I can ask you a couple of questions.

HW: Mhm

PL: Okay. Where were you from originally?

HW: I was born over in San Joaquin Valley. Kings county, a county just outside north of Hanford. Then when I was three years old, I moved to Riverdale. I went through Riverdale,

which, in case you don't know where Riverdale is, it's in the southwestern section county area of Fresno county. It's a little, small rural community and it still is.

HW: I graduated from elementary and high schools there. And then in 1927, I started to [enroll] at Fresno State in the fall of 1927. That's where I met my wife - I met her in October of that year. Six years later before we were married, we were going on our 64th year of marriage right now. We've been together quite a while. I was very active at Fresno State. Even though I wasn't very big, I was rather small, scared, and fast. So, I played football; made three letters in football, three in basketball and four in track. I was a 100 yard dash man and I was earning my way through school so as an athlete, I didn't have scholarships in those days, we had jobs.

HW: I was superintendent supervisor of the football field and when high schools and junior colleges rented the Fresno State football field, I ran the loud speaker system and marked the field - that type of thing. I think I got \$25 for that and then I hired somebody to help me, another \$5 a piece for two other guys. But at that time, Fresno State didn't have a master's degree in Agriculture, and I had decided myself one year, I wanted to go into Agriculture. But I couldn't get my bachelor's degree in Agriculture at Fresno State, so I transferred to [University of California] Davis in the fall of 1931. I got my bachelor's degree in Agriculture out of Davis in 1932. That's when I elected to go into ag[ricultural] teaching and came over here, met Cal Poly for the first time.

PL: Now, you were at Cal Poly at Voorhis, '49-'50, when did you come back to San Luis Obispo?

HW: I came back in the fall of 1950 as Executive Dean. At that time, it did not have vice presidents in the state college system. So, the Executive Dean was similar to what the vice president position later became, when they established the vice presidency.

PL: And what about your involvement with the Rose Float? Did that continue or... ?

HW: No, I'll tell you, I was so busy when I came back to Cal Poly as Executive Dean and among other things. I was in charge of the building programs of both campuses at that time. In 1950, we were just starting to build. In fact, we built the new science building in 1952-1953 - the one that's still in San Luis Obispo. Also, I was responsible under Mr. McPhee.

HW: At that time, the state colleges had to handle their own budgets. We would run to the State Board of Education; they didn't trust these California state colleges wasn't established until 1959-1960. So, at that time, the state colleges were just seven, and they were more or less orphans in a way under the State Board of Education. Each college was pretty much responsible for going to Sacramento and presenting their budget request to the legislature. Mr. McPhee had me take over quite a bit of that assignment, starting in 1950.

HW: So, I was spending a lot of time in Sacramento and with the building program because we were working with the state division of architecture at that time, which was responsible for coordinating the building programs in all of the state colleges. It wasn't until the middle of 1960's that the Trustees - the California State Colleges took over that function; we divorced

ourselves from the state division of architecture as we, the state colleges, and their building program had their own architects and master planners, that type of thing. During those years, I was so busy with those things that I did not have time to really continue with my close activity with the Rose Parade. But I sure have great respect for them, I'll tell you that.

PL: Did you go to the parade in '49, Cal Poly's first entry? Did you go to that parade?

HW: Yes, I did. And Mr. McPhee and my wife and I (each contributor) had special seats in the grandstand. We four used the grandstand seats at that time, at the desire of the students. The students in the Rose Parade Committee requested that we - that the President and I as the dean of Voorhis campus - use those tickets. It was very nice.

PL: Did you go to the football game after?

HW: Yes, but that was at our own expense. I can't remember who was playing.

PL: Cal.

HW: Do you know?

PL: Cal.

HW: Was it the University of California?

PL: No, no. I don't remember the [of the] Big 10 team was but I know Cal played.

HW: In 1950? Or 1949? Yeah... who were they playing?

PL: I can call my father—

HW: Columbia? I don't know. It was one of the eastern schools anyway.

PL: My dad was at that parade because he was at Cal at that time.

HW: Oh, is that so?

PL: Then how many parades did you go to after that?

HW: Oh, I've been to five or six. See, I went back to the Kellogg Campus as Executive Dean in 1960. That was the time that Bob Kennedy, Mr. Kennedy, and I went down to Kellogg Campus. He is Vice President, and I am Executive Dean. I stayed for two years and Bob stayed for three before he came back as Vice President at the San Luis Obispo campus because the vice presidency had been established at that time. I was continuing as Executive Dean, but I came back in 1961. I was only there for two years and then came back to San Luis Obispo in 1962.

PL: What do you remember about the attitude of the students?

HW: The attitude of all of the whole student body was supportive, but the students who were interested particularly in the Rose Parade and the Tournament were the most dedicated students - both men and women. See, women re-entered at Cal Poly in 1956, so women joined the Rose Parade Committees of both campuses at the early stages of when women first came back to Cal Poly. There was a great spirit and esprit de corps among the students, particularly the Rose Parade; they had to be because they had to work hard. Those students really contributed a lot, not only effort, but of their own means to help put on and decorate the Rose Float, I'll tell you that.

PL: When Cal Poly first entered in the 49th parade, did you think it'd go 50 years?

HW: We didn't know, we didn't know. We didn't have that long term-planning in our operation, but we knew that we wanted to make it a success and that we wanted to make a favorable presentation and representation of Cal Poly to the people that were watching and attending the Tournament Roses Parade. *But the students are to be-* It was really a student effort; there were, of course, faculty support in both campuses. The ornamental horticulture departments at both campuses, to begin with, were the big contributors; but then in later years, as the float became more mechanized, the engineering departments - in particular the one at San Luis Obispo—took a great lead and made great contributions. The schools of engineering to the development and advancement and contribution—great contribution to the parade and to the floats.

PL: In what way did the administration participate, in the early years?

HW: Well of course it had to have the approval of the administration to begin with. The administration was very supportive; President McPhee in the first place knew that it was a great public relations program and would contribute to a great deal to the positive position of Cal Poly throughout the world. Bob [Robert E.] Kennedy, who was very active at that time, he was the public relations person as well as being the top administrator at the college. He could see having been in public relations and the public relations man to begin with, could see the great strength of the program; and so the administration supported it wholeheartedly, along with the faculties - particularly the ornamental horticulture department and the engineering departments.

PL: Let's go first with the... what about the administration's support. You said that you were doing a lot of campaigning up in Sacramento, with the legislators and the senators. Did you use Rose Float as—

HW: Oh yes, we did. Yes we did.

PL: Something you talked about?

HW: We bring that to the attention of the legislators, particularly the Southern California legislators, because they were about one-third of the assemblymen and one-third of the state senators were from Orange, San Luis Obispo, Riverside, and San Bernardino counties. So we really referred the Rose Parade Float to them in terms of talking about Cal Poly; it helped to identify the college as being a part of the communities of those areas to help get the support, the

vote from those legislators, when it came to our budget time. Cal Poly did okay in those years in terms of budget assistance.

PL: So, did you think the Rose Float was partially responsible for helping Cal Poly's funding?

HW: It certainly was one of the contributors, it certainly was. And it still is. It still is strong. I don't know if all the students and faculty of the two campuses really realized how important it is, how important that entry in the Rose Parade is, but it just means a lot.

PL: In the early years, you said there was faculty support. Were there class assignments assigned with the Rose Float wherein anything like that or just in peripheral assistant?

HW: There would've been when it came to growing the flowers and that type of thing; that would've been part of the OH programs at both campuses. You see, Howard Brown—who later became dean of agriculture at San Luis Obispo campus—was head of the OH department back in those days. As a part of the regular class programs, they would have assignments like growing flowers. San Luis Obispo grew more flowers for the Rose Parade than the Voorhis campus because they had the weather and the conditions that permitted that.

PL: Now, you quoted from one yearbook and I see you have another yearbook on the table.

HW: Yes.

PL: Why did you pull that one out?

HW: I brought this one out - this was in 1949 when we had the first one. I could show the picture maybe- yeah here's a picture of when we had the second Rose Float Parade. It shows a covered wagon on the six-team... can you see it?

PL: Yeah.

HW: Six-horse team of Percheron horses, and I want to mention again that these two students from the Voorhis campus, Bob Stein and Don Miller, are especially appreciated and thanked for the contribution they made. There's one other thing I should bring out and that is this. At that time, on the Pasadena City Council was a man by the name of Warren Dorn. That's the same as Dorn's Cafe over here now in Morro Bay. Warren Dorn was a member of the city council at that time; he was very active in the Rose Parade, in fact, I think Warren and his wife both grew up in Pasadena and worked on floats for the parade. Then Warren later became a, in 1954-1955, mayor of Pasadena. At the end of '55, he quit as mayor and ran for Board of Supervisors. He was on the Board of Supervisors for Los Angeles County for many years.

HW: In fact, I should refer to the great contribution that Warren Dorn was a big supporter of Cal Poly and the admission of Cal Poly having a float in that Rose Parade back in '49, and has been a supporter at Cal Poly ever since. In fact, remember when we had the airplane accident in 1960 back in Ohio? And we had 16 of our football players killed and two other students [also]? Warren Dorn at that time was still a member of the Board of Supervisors of Los Angeles county.

He helped organize the memorial fund and put on a football team program—a game—at the stadium Coliseum in 1961, I guess it was. And when we had the Fresno State played Bowling Green, we took in a lot of money—hundreds of thousands of dollars. Then Warren served on our Cal Poly committee to donate that money to the families of the students who were killed in the airplane accident.

HW: I talked to Warren last night and told him about this, and he said that if you had any questions that you'd like to ask of him, he would be happy to talk with you about the early Rose Parade floats and anything else about Cal Poly. As a result of Warren being active in the memorial form—Cal Poly memorial form for the football team that was killed—his own sons became interested in Cal Poly and his two boys have graduated Cal Poly. They were baseball players and one of the boys is the one that's really running Dorn's Restaurant over in Morro Bay at the present time. So, if you wanted to talk with him some time, he would be happy to talk with you.

PL: Thank you. Even though you weren't directly associated with the students for the parade you know, for building the floats—

HW: No.

PL: After the first couple of years, there have been history of student pranks and shenanigans by the [inaudible] students.

HW: I didn't. I was not aware of that.

PL: [You've] Never heard any of those?

HW: No that was pretty much, I think, probably kept between the committee members, wasn't it? You were chairman, weren't you?

PL: Not that I swear to. Yes, yes but the no pranks on school too.

HW: No, I—

PL: Anything else [to add on]? Any last comments here for... now this is the 50th and this video is going to be kept in the archives but also, parts of it will be used for our 50th banquet. Any statements for everyone at the 50th or anything like that?

HW: I know they'll have a successful one again and a good entry. I just hope they continue. The spirit has to go from one committee to the next; that has to be carried by the tradition of past performances and current students passing it on. I just hope that that will continue, and I hope that the administrators at both San Luis Obispo and Kellogg campuses continue to give it the support that it needs, and to help the students with the programs that are to continue on for the next how long? Who knows, I can't foretell how much the Rose Parade will go on, but I hope it'll go on forever.

PL: Great, thanks. I'll tell you, by the enthusiasm last night that seemed the banquet between the committees—

HW: Was it?

PL: The enthusiasm from last night's committees has been shifted—

HW: Good, yeah.

PL: —It's there.

HW: It's there. Good. I tell you, I marvel at it.

End of Tape

Index

	<u>Page Number</u>
Andrews, Dale	7
Baker, Warren	8, 11
Batcheller, Jolly	18
Brophy, Roy	10
Brown, Howard	22
Bureau of Agricultural Education	2-3, 7
Cooper, George	3
Dorn, Warren	4, 22-23
Dumke, Glenn	8
Kennedy, Robert E.	21
McMahon, Byron	7
McPhee, Julian	2-3, 6-8, 10-11, 15, 21
Miller, Don	22
Poly Royal	11, 15
Reagan, Ronald	8
Rose Float Club	8
Rose Float Committee	8
Rose Parade	3
Smith, Wesley P	. 8

Stein, Bob	4, 6-7, 22
Thomas, Ed	3
Wilson, Harold	4